

**Research and Development Division**  
**Environmental and Endanger Aquatic Animal Conservation Unit**

**1. Irrawaddy Dolphin, Whale, Dolphin, Porpoise and Dugong Research and Conservation**

- (a) In 2002, Department of fisheries in collaboration with Wildlife Conservation-WCS and including related departments such as Department of forestry, Zoology Department (University of Yangon) had conducted Irrawaddy dolphin survey trip along the Ayeyarwady River, from confluence of Mali Kha and N'Mai Kha to Ga-yet-gyi Island at Bokalay Township, Ayeyarwady Region, and annually 2003 to 2020, Irrawaddy dolphin census survey and conservation activities were carried out by upstream and downstream trips between Mandalay and Bhamo river segment. 79 Irrawaddy dolphins in collecting census and research trip, between Mandalay and Bhamo river segment in 2020 were sighted and recorded.
- (b) With the intention, to protect and preserve Irrawaddy dolphins and to be passed on to future generation the traditional cooperative fishing practise between cast-net fishermen and Irrawaddy dolphin, Department of fisheries defined as Irrawaddy dolphin between Mingun (Sagaing side)/ Nantaw kyun village (Mandalay side) to Yae-daw Pogoda (Sagaing side), a 72 Km long river segment, on 28 December 2005. Department of Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation Society-WCS in collaboration with relevant Departments and Organizations implemented in continue Irrawaddy dolphin and fisheries resources conservation and reduction illegal fishing methods (fishing with electro-shock) by monthly patrol and educational trips. To create new jobs and to become the Irrawaddy dolphin conservation which involving village community itself, showing Irrawaddy dolphin and Community Based Ecotourism sector were implemented with the group that included 8 villages

in the Irrawaddy Dolphin Protected Area, and the necessary support was provided.

- (c) Department of Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation Society signed 3 times of Memorandum of Understanding–MoU: 2007–2012, 2012–2017 and 2017–2022 respectively that was once for 5 year, and implemented Irrawaddy dolphin research survey and conservation activities.
- (d) Aiming to provide more conservation and protection, by the Inland Fisheries Law of relevant Region and State Government, Department of Fisheries has extended and defined from Kyun–gyi vantage (west bank) and Maung–kone village (east bank) of Tigyaing Township, Sagaing Region to Too–chaung village (bank of Shwegu city side) and other side bank of Too–chaung village, where is 118.05 kilometer long, as Irrawaddy dolphin Protected Area (2) on 28 August, 2018.
- (e) In 2005, the survey was conducted by Department of Fisheries in collaboration with Wildlife Conservation Society, 7 species of whale, dolphin and porpoise were found, they were Bryde’s Whale, Indo–Pacific bottlenose dolphin, Indo–Pacific humpback dolphin, Long–snouted spinner dolphin, Pantropical spotted dolphin, Irrawaddy dolphin and Finless porpoise. In this survey trip, long–snouted spinner dolphin groups that included hundred individuals were sighted, there are around 500 individuals in total at the end. The second most observed species of the trip was the Indo–Pacific Bottlenose dolphin, estimated at over 200 individuals. A pair of Bryde’s Whale with a calf, that is one of the baleen whale species was found, expert Brian.D.Smith (Wildlife Conservation Society–WCS) commented that it might be their breeding ground.
- (f) Irrawaddy dolphin population in coastal areas and estuaries: a study in 2018 conducted in the waters around Main–mahla–Kyun in the Delta region 19 Irrawaddy dolphins, along the Coast of Myeik to Kawthaug of Tanintharyi coastal area in 2011 conducted 59 Irrawaddy dolphin, along the Coast and Rathedaung

to Sittwe –Ponna gyun–Pauktaw– Mrauk U- Minbya-Myebon of Rakhine coastal area and their estuaries in 2010 conducted 65 Irrawaddy dolphin was sighted respectively. According to findings of research associations, and stranding records, it is known that Irrawaddy dolphins inhabit in Kyauk-pyu coastal area of Rakhine Coast, and Gulf of Mottama, Mon State as well.

- (g) To carry out *Dugong dugon*, marine mammal research and conservation activities, Department of Fisheries, Myanmar participated and signed with Convention on Migratory Species–CMS Dugong MOU of United Nation Environment Programme on 31 October, 2007. Department of Fisheries in collaboration with international organization and support conducted *Dugong dugon* research by interview survey method in Rakhine Coast in 2005, and as well in Tanintharyi Coast, Coastal area of Ayeyarwady Region and Rakhine Coast in 2010. A study on *Dugong dugon* and Seagrass research in 12 Islands of Myeik Archipelago by snorkeling and interview methods was conducted for one month in 2006–2007, and 8 species of Seagrass were found and identified. According to the result of questionnaires’ answers that was only a small proportion of people have ever seen Dugong, it is considered that the *Dugong dugon* population in Tanintharyi Coast is not as abundant as in Rakhine coast. Due to data on stranding, or incidental catches in fishing nets and the numbers who have seen, there was a situation in the Rakhine coastal area where was more abundance of Dugong, it was found that the main areas (hot spot) were coastal water of Gwa Township, Rakhine State and Shwe-thaung-yan City (near Chaung-thar), Ayeyarwady Region in Rakhine coast.
- (h) Department of Fisheries issued Directive No. (2/2018) on 2 Jan,2018 for the purpose of conserving and protecting to 8 species of Marine mammals listed in Appendix (1) of Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora–CITES.
- (i) Department of Fisheries issued Directive No. (5/2022) on 25 July,2022 for the purpose of conserving and protecting to 4 species of Marine mammals listed in Appendix (2) of Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora–CITES. In the current period, Township and District Fisheries

Departments in Regions and States have been carrying out public awareness activities on endangered aquatic animal conservation.

## **2. Marine Fisheries Conservation**

Department of fisheries and Wildlife Conservation Society having signed Letter of Agreement-LoA in 2016, marine fisheries resources conservation activities and building to recover with national plan to Marine Spatial Plan-MSP for fisheries were implemented by the Securing marine fisheries, livelihoods and biodiversity in Myanmar through co-management in coastal areas starting from Rakhine State. Department of Fisheries defined as Kyein-ta-li Inshore Fisheries Co-management Area on August 8, 2018, covering 179,000 Acres, from mouth of the Mee Chaung Ye stream near Nyaung-pin-thar village in the north of Kyein-ta-li Town to mouth of the Taing Gyo stream near Kywe Gyaing village in the south of Kyein-ta-li, Gwa Township, Thandwe District, Rakhine State. Collecting data on fisheries inside Kyein-ta-li Inshore Fisheries Co-management Area were carried out monthly. 14 numbers of Pelagic Data System-PSD, Fishing boat monitoring system devices, were installed on 7 inshore fishing boats of Ngapali, Thandwe Township and 7 fishing boats of Kyauk-pyu Township, Rakhine State.